

2009-07 How can I work with the fear I project

[Speaker 2] (0:05 - 0:53)

Hello. I have a question about children. I did a lot of spiritual work on myself before I had children.

And now I realize that I've transferred all of my fear of death and need for security onto my children. And I don't know what to do about it. I don't know what the best course of action is because I realize that it's part of taking care of them is to protect them.

But on the other hand, it goes against being present and being in presence and definitely brings on anxiety and wanting to control situations and their lives.

[Speaker 1] (0:53 - 0:59)

Do you overprotect or how does it manifest in actual daily life?

[Speaker 2] (1:01 - 1:45)

Well, my children are unusual in that they both have special health problems. So they involved both my husband and I a great deal in caring for their health at a time when it was really important. But now we give them the same amount of attention even though for the most part they're okay.

So it's kind of like we got into that pattern of putting all of our energy into them. And it's continuing, but I'm not sure where to let go and where to hold on.

[Speaker 1] (1:45 - 15:37)

Yes. Thank you. Certain behaviors, once they are in place, have a certain momentum and they kind of take you over almost, especially then if it happens between two people or an even larger group.

Behavior pattern can become an energy stream that takes you over. You can have it, for example, when there are riots or whatever, sometimes they go on for days because the people who participate in the riots, nothing to do with you, of course, just a similar, same phenomenon on a larger scale, the phenomenon of people being in the grip of a certain behavior pattern which is an energy stream. And so they are not doing it, they are in the grip of it.

Nobody is doing it. So that can even happen here, a certain kind of behavior becomes initiated and then refuses to go away. Similar phenomenon would be when you are in a certain state, you don't want to get out of that state.

Children, for example, many children, it's a very simple example, and even adults, even

when they're tired, they don't want to go to bed because somehow there's always something else, because the state of being awake wants to continue despite the tiredness. But once you're in bed and asleep, you don't want to get out of bed in the morning because then that momentum wants to continue. Or the child doesn't want to go into the bath or the shower because it doesn't want to change its state from dryness to wetness.

Once you're in the bath, you don't want to get out because it's so nice. So there are certain energies that want to sustain themselves and behavior patterns can be like that. So the essential thing then for you is to have spaces of awareness during the day from where you can be aware of whatever behavior you're manifesting at that moment so that you're not totally controlled by the old pattern.

And this is why it's so essential to have your daily life, your day, totally interspersed with what I call spaces. This is just another way of saying step out of your life situation, which is in time, past and future, and mind, and step into the present moment. So a little space opens up inside.

That's the space of awareness. From the awareness you can see the energy behind an old pattern of behavior and this pattern either makes you think a certain thought or it immediately goes into action. It makes you do something.

And so you can sometimes then feel the arising behavior before it manifests as an action. You can feel the impulse to go there and do this protective thing to the child when it's quite unnecessary. It's no longer needed.

So you can feel the impulse arising and recognizing it as an old impulse, but only from the space of awareness. And then you don't need to act on it. You can say, oh, there's the old impulse.

And so the impulse is there, arises, and then subsides. Or if thought comes in, some compulsive thought about your child, that also, from that space of awareness, that inner space of aware presence, the stillness, another word for it, from the stillness, you observe the thought that wants to push itself, is pushing itself into your mind. You have to think this now and say, okay, there it is.

And you allow it. You don't fight it because whatever you fight you make stronger. So you are not in the grip of it anymore.

So more aware spaces. Vital with all children to bring spatial consciousness, as I sometimes call it, or space consciousness, nothing to do with science fiction, to bring space consciousness into the relationship with your child. For example, it's essential not to always relate to your child from the point of view of doing.

Do this, don't do that. Now we need to do that. Now let's do that.

Don't do that. Don't go there. Go there.

But to relate to your child, that has its place, of course. But if that's all there is, then it's a very one-dimensional relationship because what is missing is being. What is missing is to bring in the spaciousness into the relationship where you can just be with the child and look at the child and listen to the child and be there as the aware presence for the child.

And so you don't want the child to do this or that. You're just there with the child and observing, watching, listening, being, giving attention. That's a beautiful thing.

And that's beyond any pattern. That's not an inherited pattern. It's presence.

Presence is not an old pattern. It's eternally new. It's timeless.

So most parents don't know that yet. They cannot bring the timeless dimension into the relationship with their child. And so the relationship becomes full of conflict eventually.

You have the best of intentions. And yet, then the child grows and then suddenly the child is reactive and you don't know why. And there's conflict.

The reason is that the most vital dimension is missing. You've done all you could but doing wasn't enough. Doing is necessary but it's not enough.

Being was neglected. So being means to bring the aware spaces into the relationship where doing doesn't matter so much when doing can still happen within it. But that's vital.

And of course not only into the relationship with your child but also bring it into every relationship. No relationship can thrive if there is no spaciousness in it. And the spaciousness is there when you look at the other person and there's no thought in your head while you look because you're simply there as an aware presence.

Then there's a true relationship beyond the forms, the psychological form and the physical form. You can look at another person and just be there as the aware presence with no thought, just an alert presence. That's what I call, that is space.

If you can't do it with another human being, start by doing it with a flower. But I know you can. If you can't do it with another human being, do it with a dog.

It might be a little bit easier to be the aware space with a dog because the dog is already free of thought. So the dog does not stimulate thought in you as a human being would do with the other person probably thinking. So that transmits itself.

It's contagious. Every state transmits itself. So you might be dragged into thinking also.

So to have that no thought in any relationship is vital. It's vital for your children so that old patterns cease to operate and the new can come in. Then from that state of consciousness you can respond to the need of the child but it's no longer responding from a pattern that is no longer useful.

From the aware space you also know what is right for any given moment, whether you need to allow the child to explore, for example, or whether you need to say, come away from there because there's a 50-meter drop you might fall. So there's always a balance between allowing the child to find out for him or herself and to protect the child and say, no, come here. It's a very subtle balance but it's much easier from awareness to know where the balance is and to do the right thing from there.

So your entire life then, it's not just that. So the question has wider implications. It's not just to do with your children but the spaciousness needs to be there inside yourself.

Wherever you go, if you go into nature, without spaciousness you're hardly there because you're thinking. While you're surrounded by beauty and aliveness, you're thinking. Now, you're either thinking about you and yourself and your problems and you're only aware of the forest or the seaside or the mountains or the clouds or the wind and the breeze and the beautiful noises of nature on the periphery of your awareness because you're thinking about your failed investments or, a little bit better, you might be thinking about what you're looking at.

Oh, I wonder what that's called. What's that? I can't remember what that's called.

I'll have to look it up. You're not fully present either. You're maybe a little bit more present than the person who's totally away but not much more because you're still trapped in concepts in your mind.

Can you be there simply as spacious awareness? Like a little child but deeper, more intense. Can you be anywhere as spacious awareness rather than a person?

That's a new state of consciousness that's arising. Can I be here as spacious awareness with anybody? Of course, as I said, probably a little easier with a dog or a cat because you can meet the dog or the cat in the state of no thought.

The dog has no thought because it hasn't arrived at thought yet. It's intelligent but it has no conceptual thinking. The dog hasn't arrived at conceptual thinking.

It's below conceptual thinking and you have gone beyond conceptual thinking into the spaciousness. And there you meet in no mind. That's why it's so beautiful to relate to an animal and why so many people feel drawn to animals these days because it's the only time they can be free of their conceptual mind when they look at the pet, the dog or the cat.

Nothing to think about. And you know the dog or cat is not thinking about you. They're looking at you.

No thought. No thought. It doesn't mean that you have regressed.

It means for you, you've gone beyond thinking, stepped above thinking. And then you can meet the entire dimension that is below thinking in a wonderful state of oneness, the oneness that you sense with all nature that's around you. If you're in conceptual thinking, you're separated.

You meet everything because when you're not thinking about the tree and the bird and the breeze and the insect, there is no me and them. There's a single phenomenon, the forms arising in consciousness. And so you're like God that says, and God saw what he, she, it had made and recognized it as good.

The consciousness out of which the whole universe came, you represent that when you're in the state of no thought. You represent the ground of being, of all being. And you walk around nature and you say, if you had a thought, it would say, oh, I did a good thing there.

And you see that even in the tension between opposites, even that there's a deeper good beyond that. Yes, occasionally one thing eats up another, but there is a greater harmony that envelops the whole. You cannot sense that harmony when you're trapped in conceptual thinking.

So next time you can tell me how it's going with your children. It's a spiritual practice like everything else. It becomes a spiritual practice.